



All-uminum YOU NEED

// BY YANIC SIMARD

WHEN DEBATING BETWEEN METALS IN INTERIOR DESIGN, people usually focus on one iconic match-up: silver versus gold. Stainless steel also gets a lot of attention for its popularity in modern appliances (and Modern-period furnishings), but one contemporary favourite has gone a little overlooked: aluminum.

Anodized (rust resistant) aluminum's cool tones and light weight make it an excellent choice for a wide range of furnishings, from seating to lighting and everything in between. Since metals so easily mix with other materials, and each other, in both modern and traditional schemes, look no further than my list of aluminum treasures to give your home in the clouds a mineral infusion:

1 Turned Dining Table Crate and Barrel's Mallorca table pairs metallic legs (in a turnery design reminiscent of hand carved wood) with a marble top – both materials are cool and sleek, but the aluminum draws out the silvery marble veining, making the stone the real star. Contrast this piece with traditional bentwood seats in an

inky blue finish, or get playful and gather mismatched chairs using the same white and aluminum elements in different ways.

2 Industrial Egg Chair I found this statement-making modern egg chair at new boutique In the Know (aka ITK), where unique pieces like this appear, drop in price every week and are quickly snapped up to make room for even more designer finds. The materials add an air of masculinity, as well as a sense of fun (a perfect spot to sink into next to a fireplace), while the rivets give this 1950s classic some new industrial character – look for this detail if you want a similarly edgy appeal.

3 Cool Cabinetry To achieve a stunning yet accessible transitional look (and touch of sparkle) in the kitchen or bathroom, consider switching to cabinet doors with windowed fronts and aluminum trim. It frames your dishes, glassware or wash towels like an art gallery display case, creating a dramatic statement but an airy atmosphere. Try Ikea's various cabinet doors (such as the Lillangen) in this finish for a quick switch-out.

4 Metal Rocker The 1940s classic 1006 chair (the Ten-oh-6, by Emeco) was originally designed for hard wear: nicknamed the Navy chair, it was commissioned by the U.S. government to withstand abuse from both the elements and sailors, but now is a favourite for modern and transitional dining spaces. Philippe Starck's Heritage Rocking Armchair updates this already contemporary-feeling staple with a rocking base for a softer look. Add either this or the original to virtually any room for an easy update (available at Klaus Nienkamper and hip boutiques) – having been born and raised French, I never live anywhere without a rocking chair.

5 Branch Legged Table Bethel International (available through Elte) produces a series of tables which reverse expectations on the metal-with-wood pairing: the metal legs are shaped as raw tree branches, playing against the hard, crisp wooden top. Pair a table like this with the aforementioned Navy chairs, or clear plastic ones for an instant 1-2-3 material-mixing punch.

6 Traveller's Trunks While browsing bethelin.com, I also noticed luggage-like metal trunks which actually serve as chests of drawers or wardrobes, underscoring how beautifully aluminum pairs with natural materials



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like leather. Use one or two tall pieces like this (stunning from all sides) as a wall to divide a large room into two zones or define a dressing area.

7 Sturdy Stool Metal stools are a popular choice for bar seating, even in private homes where the crowd of guests isn't usually so rough. Always make sure, however, to measure your counter and stool for height: true bar stool seats (as opposed to counter seats), at around 30 in. tall, are only meant for higher bar counters starting at 40 in. For a trendy and modern, winter-ready effect, drape a small faux sheepskin over each seat for some engaging contrast.



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the beauty of a very functional material. The design captures this so perfectly, in fact, that the light ironically won the Compasso d'Oro award in 1989 – also known as the Golden Compass.

ALUMINUM PROVES ITS METTLE

Studio Swine's Can City project takes discarded aluminum cans (pulled from the streets of Sao Paolo), melts them down and repurposes the raw materials to create artistic, handcrafted modern stools. It beautifies the world in two ways at once, and really goes to show – it's time aluminum got the respect it deserves! Check out the project at: studioswine.com

8 Mixed Material Consoles Designer Hilla Shamia's cast stools start with the organic nature of raw wood, fusing it to a metal frame and celebrating the contrast between the two. Metal and wood is a timeless combination that balances traditional warmth with cool modern lines perfectly. Use a bench like this where you need flexible seating, and pull it up as a cocktail table when you're having drinks for one.

9 Working Classic The ageless Herman Miller desk chair (available from dwr.com) is such a designer favourite I even have several in my design studio. The clean lines of the simple upholstery and gently rounded metal edges create a more elegant look than the overly technical-looking selections of many corporate executives (while still providing stylish comfort).

10 Task Lamp Also available from DWR (short for Design Within Reach), the Tolomeo desk light translates the look of rusty old work lamps into a sparkling, architectural form that gives you light just where you need it while celebrating



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is the principal designer of the Toronto Interior Design Group. Specializing in residential and commercial projects, Yanic often applies his signature high/low and old/new combination design techniques in developing unique interiors. Simard has created designs for clients in Toronto, Montreal and Miami, and has appeared as a regular guest expert on Citytv's *CityLine*. For more information visit tidg.ca